



# Esprit de Corps

A bulletin of the Washington Service Corps

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## Member input drives SERVES Institute

Over 700 members of the Washington Service Corps gathered in Ocean Shores, Washington for three days in March at the Spring training institute known as SERVES. The agenda, largely driven by member comments and requests, was active and provided members with options for learning and giving back to the community were the conference was held.

Change was evident from the opening session. WSC Executive Director, Nancy Pringle welcomed the members to Ocean Shores, and turned the agenda over to Kayje Booker an AmeriCorps\*VISTA Leader. Kayje introduced a multi media presentation she developed featuring each of the WSC AmeriCorps teams. Two AmeriCorps members shared their stories of service, setting an upbeat tone to the beginning of the conference. Members had the opportunity to choose from 78 workshops during six separate sessions.

Workshops focused on helping members develop skills necessary to succeed in their service assignments. Topics included classroom management, dealing with bullies, preparing for a weapons of mass destruction incident, managing volunteers, conflict resolution, watershed preservation, program sustainability, managing stress, teaching reading comprehension and many more.

Two service projects provided members a break from the workshops. One hundred eighty nine cubic feet of trash and recyclables were collected by



Danielle Bonner, VISTA Leader for the Washington Reading Corps at Federal Way Public Schools, addressed the conference with her story of the journey to service.

150 members during a three hour beach clean-up on Tuesday morning. In addition, fifty members traveled to Emerson School in Hoquiam to participate in a reading emphasis day with kindergarten and first grade students.

The conference ended on much the same note as it began. Allen Dietz, the new Deputy Director of the Washington Service Corps, thanked the members for their attendance, participation, and contributions. He then turned the stage over to the AmeriChoir, an impromptu group of members who combined their voices for an upbeat send-off.

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## The Geography of Metamorphosis



Rebecca Garvoille, an AmeriCorps member serving at the Chelan-Douglas Land Trust in Wenatchee, reads from her poetry notebook during the SERVES talent night.

Two paths collide,  
Grow  
And subside.  
*L'aube*, the beginning-  
Energy clustered close together  
That then spreads wide.  
A watercolor pigment on paper:  
Thinning, changing, diluting, pooling pigment  
In new puddles  
That flow into other ways of being –  
The essence of personal change.

Life stretching differently,  
Concentrating itself in other niches of the world  
And of the soul,  
Fluid and in motion.

Paths diverge  
Grow  
And re-emerge.  
Life simply changes  
And so do we  
As paths criss-cross and divide.

## New staff join the WSC team

Two additions have been made to the Washington Service Corps staff to fill positions vacated by the departures announced in the last issue of *ESPRIT*.

Joining the WSC in a leadership position is Allen Dietz, the new Acting Deputy Director. Allen is known to many members of the



Allen Dietz, Deputy Director

WSC through his previous work as an AmeriCorps Program Director in Austin, Texas and a staff member of the Texas Commission on Volunteerism.

Allen came to Washington because he had the

good fortune of marrying Louise Verellen, a former WSC supervisor. Most recently he has worked as a consultant to national service programs, including the Washington Reading Corps.

Sheryl Baker has rejoined the WSC staff. She served as one of the original WSC staff members from 1983 to 1989.

Sheryl will share responsibility for the Washington Reading



Sheryl Baker, WRC Coordinator

Corps (WRC) teams with Carolyn Benard.

## Having fun with books is important stuff on Seuss' day

**By Manda Edwards**

Read Across America Day, Dr. Seuss' Birthday, Wacky Wednesday... whatever you call it, March 2nd is a serious day of service for members of the Washington Reading Corps. Some schools plan big birthday parties, others celebrate all week with dress-up days, and still others keep the literacy party going throughout March.

Michelle Bell and Courtney Barchi helped Spokane's Audubon Elementary celebrate with a birthday bash. Not only were there fun literacy activities, snacks, prizes, and free books, but they had great guest readers and volunteers. George Maupin from Q6 was the big celebrity of the night, but volunteers also

included six student athletes from Gonzaga University, the Page Ahead VISTAs, and a player from the Spokane semi-pro football team, the SaberCats.

Lisa Hamm, Amanda Graves, and Kim Yunker invited a record number of guest readers. Stevens Elementary had halls filled with TV newscasters, Air Force members in full dress, athletes, community members, and student escorts. Spokane Mayor, Jim West, even stopped in to read about the Sneeches with a second grade class.

Jodi Walter and Kyle at Pratt Elementary helped the party last all week with trivia games,

guest readers and a breakfast of... games, such as Seuss Scrabble, Seuss Bingo, a book walk, One you guessed it, Fish Two Green Eggs and Ham. Fishing game and others.

Deb Siks helped Northport

**AmeriCorps\* VISTA, Lisa Hamm with student volunteer, Dot Davis**



Everyone enjoyed cupcakes, ice cream bars, and of course, free books.

These are just a few of the many different ways that Reading Corps members celebrated March 2nd.

Elementary celebrate Wacky Wednesday in a collaboration between WRC and First Book. Staff filled the building with Wacky things for kids to notice. Then students had to write down at least five things that were wacky to get into a prize drawing. Adults and kids had fun dressing up in wacky outfits, turning maps and signs upside down, and decorating a Christmas tree in the cafeteria proclaiming "Happy 4th of July!" High school students ran literacy

Everyone celebrated March 3rd in the exact same way, with a giant sigh of relief – before plans begin for the next big literacy event.

*Wouldn't it be fun to gather a list of creative Dr. Seuss ideas to share? If you email an idea to me, I will make a packet to bring to the Supervisor Exchange in May. The more specific the instructions, the better. Only eleven more months until Dr. Seuss Day 2006. medwards@esd101.net*



**Spokane's Q6 Weatherman, George Maupin reads Cloudy, With a Chance of Meatballs**

providing 250 free books for children. Kyle performed as the Cat in the Hat. They capped the week with



# Snapshots from

AmeriCorps members clean up a beach campfire of garbage and recyclables. More than 7 cubic yards of debris was collected on the beach and nearby city streets.



Kayje Booker, Washington VISTA Leader receives the award from Marilee Eckert for her dedication to the service she has had upon her.



Jimmy Chu and Heather Byrne, AmeriCorps team mates from Fremont Public Association, share their talents with a supportive crowd at the SERVES talent show.

Honoring Debbie Schuffenhauer, the Washington Service Corps, Key Area Coordinator, Commission staff, join with VISTA to tribute.



# around the Corps



Corps' AmeriCorps member of the Year of the National Association of State Corps (NASCC). Kayje was selected from among 23,000 members. The award recognizes her commitment and the impact

The Construction Team from Yakima AmeriCorps, has finished two homes which are already occupied with residents who are completely satisfied with their purchases. Here the team begins to frame the foundation for one of their projects



Spokane Ready\*Corps members complete Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training/



teen years at AmeriCorps Su-NS and State f in a group



Individual Placement (IP) members gather prior to the opening of SERVES. IP's serve alone or in small groups and often do not work on a daily basis with other AmeriCorps members. Here they meet in regional groups and share ideas for meeting the needs of their communities.

## Half-way through; a member reflects on service

**Laura Clemmer**  
IP Member

It's hard to believe that almost six months has passed since the start of my WSC AmeriCorps position at the Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group (SFEG). I feel that, though I was not sure in the beginning, I now have a pretty good grasp of what it's like to work for a small non-profit agency. Like most, SFEG depends greatly on people for its survival. It is people, after all, that make the mission of an organization achievable.

The mission of SFEG is to *educate and engage local communities in habitat restoration and watershed stewardship activities in order to enhance salmonid populations*. As an AmeriCorps Individual Placement, it has been my job to know that mission inside and out, and to help

accomplish it, primarily through education and outreach.

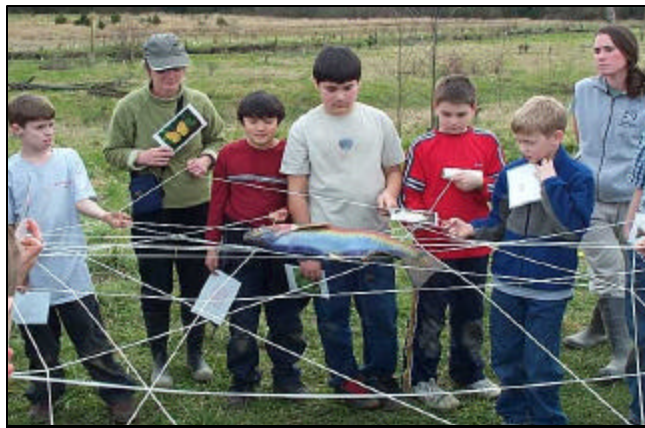
Educating others began, as it usually does, with educating myself. Through training, workshops, and research, I have learned about

riparian zones, water quality, watersheds, stormwater, near-shore areas, and more. I have put this knowledge to use in presentations, in representing SFEG at many events, educating audiences from young

three field trips for each class. They learned about salmon, habitat restoration, water quality, native plants, birds, wildlife, and the "web of life" that connects it all. I learned how to make these topics consistently fun and interesting for a range of attention spans.

So it is, that day-to-day, I learn something new, whether I am in the office or the field. I spend a great deal of time in the office, where a lot of the outreach is done. Though I had done some of these kinds of things before, I've learned much more about developing brochures, mailers, and media announcements.

Sometimes people ask me what I've been doing, and I find it hard to answer simply. It's a lot of little tasks that add up to one big one: "getting things done."



AmeriCorps member Laura Clemmer helps students understand the importance of the salmon in our Pacific Northwest "Web of Life."

salmon identification, biology, conservation and monitoring techniques, streamside habitat restoration, native plants,

children to adults.

Working extensively with children from Clear Lake Elementary, I did a class presentation and led

## AmeriCorps construction team builds community in Yakima

The Construction Team from Yakima AmeriCorps, is busy this year. They have finished two homes, that are already occupied.

Team sponsor, Washington Opportunities Industrialization Center (OIC) has contracted to build the new Veterans Clinic in Yakima. The

Construction Team worked on the clinic building, doing much of the finish work, and the occupants have been pleased with the result.

Habitat for Humanity has been working with OIC this year allowing the team to do Service work in the Toppenish area. The team has felt

fulfilled helping not only in Yakima but also in a community where team member Mark Batin lives.

Each team member presented two units of the Civic Engagement curriculum to their peers. Team member Aaron Frank will partner with Excel High School in Yakima to teach Civic

Engagement to a group of 12 students.

The team will be serving their community this Spring by partnering with the City of Yakima to paint over graffiti, install metal handicap ramps for community members, and painting a community center.

(See picture on Page 5.)



## Ready\*Corps VISTAs prepare schools and students

AmeriCorps\*VISTA members serving in schools is not uncommon, but members working in schools on disaster preparedness is. The Ready\*Corps team has several members working in schools to teach students about emergency

Pierce County is working on procuring supplies for the district's emergency supplies kits. They are also:

- planning and carrying out disaster drills,
- organizing Safety Week, including CPR and first aid training,
- visiting children in schools to talk about preparedness,
- raising funds for emergency supplies.

Duck N. Cover, a character created by team member Quinn Slayton, stars in his own book.

The duckling, complete with his own yellow hard-hat, teaches children about safety. They also work with students to conduct and evaluate fire drills.

A team of VISTAs in the Spokane public schools serve at five different middle schools —

Glover, Chase, Garry, Shaw and Sacajawea — on projects such as starting school disaster clubs, mentoring at-risk youth and assisting in after-school clubs. Their goals are to support school district risk management

activities, serve a diverse student population, mentor students to strengthen educational engagement, and provide after school activities for students, including Civic Engagement

projects, Student Emergency Response Team (SERT) Clubs, and community service. The team also works to support community, faith-based, tribal and youth programs, and they participate in disaster preparedness efforts in the community.

Ready\*Corps members working in schools teach the youth more than just how to get ready for disasters; they also teach students self-reliance and teamwork skills. Pursuing partnerships with schools will be a goal of the Ready\*Corps program



Students can check the gas meters for damage.

management and disaster preparedness.

Diane Dyer, a VISTA member working in Walla Walla County coordinates Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training for the county. In addition to her CERT duties, she coordinates with Pioneer Middle School to operate a School Emergency Response Team (SERT) training program. SERT, similar to CERT but geared for youth, is a new program that is still getting off the ground. Diane designed a logo for the team, which has been embroidered onto patches to give to the students who complete the training. The SERT team has about 20 students, and the principal of Pioneer is looking at making SERT an elective, for-credit class.

A team of AmeriCorps\*VISTA members at Bethel Public Schools in

The lessons of CERT apply to schools and become SERT.



Under adult supervision, students can help move the injured to safety.

in the future, because such partnerships can benefit the youth, the AmeriCorps members and the communities served.



## Washington State Employment Security

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Created by the State Legislature and Governor in 1983 the WSC provides residents of the state of Washington with opportunities to serve their communities. The WSC assists private non-profit organizations and units of local government in addressing community needs and providing meaningful service experiences.

Since 1992, the WSC has been a key player in the national service movement, engaging Americans of all ages and backgrounds in service that lights the darkness in communities across the nation. AmeriCorps members perform service having direct and demonstrable impact in the areas of education, the environment, human services, homeland security and public safety.

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When planning your team's AmeriCorps "graduation," coordinate with the other teams served by your program coordinator. Avoid scheduling your event at the same time as another team. Your coordinator would love to be at your event.



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